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REMARKS

Claims 1-21 remain under consideration.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his many courtesies in the interview with their counsel of May 27, 2005. Although no agreement was reached, Applicants are confident that progress was made, and appreciate the Examiner's time and efforts.

The amendment of claim 16 herein simply corrects a typographical error, and does not amend the scope of the claimed material in any fashion. Applicants maintain their claim to any and all equivalents of the unamended claim, and reserve the right to present claim 16 in unamended fashion during further prosecution before the PTO.

A. Claims 1-13 and 19-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Skipper

Applicants respectfully traverse the §102(b) rejection of claims 1-13, and 19-21. In order to maintain this rejection, each and every element of the claimed invention must be disclosed in at least as great detail as claimed.

Independent claims 1, 8 and 19 each require "PV-bonding," which is not disclosed by Skipper. Prior to amendment, Applicants claimed "post-vulcanization" bonding and have amended the claim to require "PV-Bonding." PV-Bonding is defined in the specification, page 3 lines 3-18, as a process in accordance with United States Patents 4,987,679 and 5,031,873 and as including a structural adhesive. Skipper does not disclose PV-Bonding, and therefore cannot anticipate independent claims 1, 8 or 19.

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Likewise, Skipper cannot anticipate claims 2-7, 9-13, or claims 20-21 depending directly or indirectly from the independent claims.

Indeed, the teachings of Skipper unequivocally teach away from the use of PV-bonding in a mount or strut mount as claimed. Specifically, Skipper teaches that the "rigid outer member [which] extends around the inner rigid member and is maintained spaced therefore by one or more components of *resilient* elastomeric material." Skipper, column 1, lines 6-9. By teaching that the components are to be 'resilient', Skipper teaches away from use of PV-bonding and its associated structural adhesive. Therefore, any potential use of Skipper in a §103(a) rejection would be flawed.

Additionally, Skipper discloses the need to "provide the required degree of precompression of the elastomeric material of layer 12" (column 4, lines 53-54). In contrast, the claimed PV-bonding allows for bonding such that "high pressure is not required to achieve good bonds." (specification, page 3, lines 9-11). Thus, by teaching the need to compress the elastomeric material, Skipper unequivocally teaches away from the claimed PV-bonding. Indeed, by disclosing an in-mold bond (column 4, line 48 to column 5 line 5), Skipper unequivocally teaches away from bonding other than using an in-mold bond, such as PV-bonding.

Additionally, Skipper does not disclose "a plurality of isolation pads" as claimed in independent claims 1, 8, and 19. At most Skipper discloses a single isolation pad and a "plastic ring 19" (column 4, lines 18, 33, 47) that the Examiner likens to an isolation pad. However, those of ordinary skill in the art would readily recognize that isolation pads and

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plastic rings serve different functions. Therefore, Skipper cannot anticipate the instant invention for at least this additional reason.

The Examiner's assertion that both 12 and 19 of Skipper are interpreted as the claimed isolation pads illustrates the Examiner's misconceptions. The issue here is whether the plastic rings 19 of Skipper read on the claimed isolation pads, not whether the pads can be made of any elastomeric material or polymer. Skipper is quite explicit that the plastic rings 19 "each [to] have an inner surface of part-spherical shape for adhesion to the rubber layer 12, and an outer surface for frictional engagement with the radially inner surface of the cylindrical portion 18 of the outer member." Skipper, column 4, lines 18-23. Thus, regardless of the material comprising the plastic rings 19, plastic rings 19 are *not* isolation pads, and their disclosure in Skipper cannot anticipate the instant claims.

Furthermore, each of claims 2, 4, 13, and 21 require that the bonding occur substantially simultaneously. In contrast, Skipper discloses that the bonding occurs in stages, including a precompression stage (column 4, lines 53-54) or in sequence (see column 4, line 55 to column 5, line 5). Therefore, Skipper does not disclose, and furthermore teaches away, from the limitations of claims 2, 4, 13, and 21.

Withdrawal of the rejections to claims 1-13 and 19-21 is requested.

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B. Claims 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cothenet in view of Rau

The rejection of claims 14-18 is traversed.

Neither Cothenet nor Rau teach or suggest a "plurality of isolation pads positioned between the output side attachment member and the strut body wherein at least two of the pads comprise different performance characteristics" as claimed in claim 14. At most, Cothenet in view of Rau teaches use of a single isolation pad.

Furthermore, neither Cothenet nor Rau teach or suggest PV-bonding the isolation pads to each other, as claimed in claim 16. At most, Cothenet teaches that multiple pads can be used in a single connecting device, but not bonding the pads to other pads, and not bonding the pads to other pads using PV-bonding.

Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 14-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is therefore respectfully requested.

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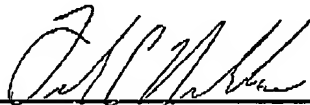
CONCLUSION

The Examiner's rejections have been obviated by the above remarks. The Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-21 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103, and 112. In view of the foregoing remarks, favorable consideration and passage to issue of the present application are respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,
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